

The Brethren Evangelist,

ASHLAND, OHIO.

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THE PRICE OF THE EVANGELIST.

It will be remembered that the National Conference advised the Brethren Book and Tract Committee to consider the advisability of publishing the EVANGELIST at \$1.00 per year instead of \$1.50. It is our opinion that to make this change at the present time, would be unwise. This conviction was reached, and is based on a careful investigation and consideration of the subject in all its phases. If we could be certain that every subscriber would pay \$1.00, cash in advance, for his paper, so that no books would need to be kept, that agents would be willing to make a thorough canvass of their territory, secure subscriptions and collect money, *free of charge*, and that there would be no losses, then it might be safe to make the reduction, and then only with the assurance that the subscription list would be largely increased by reason of the reduction. Of the former we have no certainty, and not very much of the latter; we therefore think it better to continue the price at \$1.50. When, at National Conference, we expressed ourselves as favoring the reduction, it was on the above conditions, which conditions, we do not now believe would be complied with.

When the subscription list reaches that number where a reduction would be justifiable, would it not even then be the part of wisdom to *enlarge* the paper, make it better in every respect, rather than reduce the price? Other denominations have found this to be the more desirable and we should be willing to learn by their experience. Such papers as the *New York Christian Advocate*, the *Religious Telescope*, the *Reformed Church Messenger*, the *Lutheran Observer*, the *Western Recorder* and the *Gospel Messenger*, could never have been what they now are, if the price had been reduced to \$1.00. Of late the *Gospel Messenger* has been enlarged and improved, and other papers have enlarged and otherwise improved, as the subscription list increased. This we believe to be the proper course for us to pursue.

And now brethren and sisters, let us en-

deavor to make this the most prosperous year for the EVANGELIST in its history. To do this we must begin now. Will not our pastors prepare the way to reach this most desirable end? Prosperous, not only financially, but what is more important, spiritually also. We hope to have a list of able contributors, and so far as in us lies, the usefulness of our church paper, shall be greatly improved. To accomplish this, two things are necessary. First, a good subscription list, and second, able contributions. With October 1, we began to keep a correct list of subscriptions as follows: 1. Those who subscribe at 25 cents to the end of the year. 2. Those who subscribe from November 1, to the end of 1896, according to our special offer. 3. Those who subscribe for one year. 4. Those who subscribe for six months. This record will be carefully kept until time of next Conference, Sept. 1, 1896, a period of eleven months. Now, brethren, let us begin the work and see what can be done. Within a few weeks, we will issue a prospectus for 1896, for the benefit of pastors, agents, and all who desire to do something for the paper. These will be sent to pastors and agents, and we ask them to give the matter their attention and earnest consideration. By uniting our efforts we *must* succeed.

MUSIC IN THE CHURCHES.

The subject of music in our churches is one that deserves special attention. As a rule, church-goers do not realize the fact that the singing of sacred song is as verily a part of worship as praying and preaching. For this reason there are those in our congregations who join in sacred song, who have no thought of rendering acceptable worship to the Lord. They sing, because they *can* sing and enjoy it. But does it ever occur to them that in singing sacred songs, if not right at heart, they are rendering a lip service, as verily as if they said prayers. By no means would we forbid the unconverted to render praise, but what consistency is there in a wicked man singing: "Jesus, I Will Trust Thee," when at heart he has no faith in Jesus, and in public blasphemes him? It *does* seem to be out of harmony with the "eternal fitness" of things. It is the duty of pastors to instruct people, to educate them along these lines.

But the unconverted are not alone in singing without the understanding, while many are compelled to listen to so-called

music which is wholly unintelligible. There should be harmony between the words and music, and in no case should the music be rendered at the sacrifice of the words and sentiment of the song. When the choir renders a piece of music, the words of which are wholly unintelligible to the audience, then it is a mere mumbling of words which is an insult to the congregation. That is not singing with the "spirit and understanding." A solo, of which not one word is understood by the audience, is abominable in the hearing of God and men and women. As well say a prayer in Latin, or mumble a lot of words, not one of which is understood by the audience, as sing a solo, the words of which are unintelligible to the hearers. What would be the effect if the minister would utter a prayer with such a mumbling and confusion of words that the audience could not distinguish it from the speech of an Italian who knew not a word of English? This would be no worse than the singing of a solo with no distinct enunciation of the poetry. The *Christian Intelligencer*, in speaking of this subject, says:

"An attempt to tender advice or even to express our desires to the musical people who lead in our public devotions, may result only in the reply: 'Mind your own business,' but we venture to suggest that a solo is decidedly ineffective if the words of the poetry are not distinctly enunciated; that the music is what it ought to be if in harmony with the words through which it is conveyed, and that a chorus is not enjoyed by the decided majority of listeners if nobody knows what it is about. The sacrifice of the words to the musical sounds simply destroys the power of the performance. It is all nonsense to assert that the musical sounds are of such value as to warrant a sacrifice of everything else. That may apply to a brass band or any instrumental performance, but is not what is expected in the congregational worship of God and from a service of song. A rebellion of the pews would be entirely justified against the abominable mouthing of words by solo performers, quartettes and choruses. It would be wise to say with resolution, 'We will no longer submit to this outrage,' and accompany it with appropriate action."

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear. Worry is rest upon the blade. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction.—*Henry Ward Beecher*.